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SS. PETER AND PAUL









ONLY LUKE IS WITH ME.

I HAVE FOUGHT A GOOD FIGHT

I HAVE FINISHED MY COURSE

I HAVE KEPT THE FAITH

# SS. PETER & PAUL

DEPICTED BY

H. J. FORD

WITH NOTES ON THE PICTURES BY

W. K. LOWTHER CLARKE

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## PREFACE

ON the title-page of this book the artist's name is put first because the pictures are the main thing and the reading part is added to help you to understand the pictures better. The Acts are not so well known to young people as the Gospels, partly because they seem less interesting—the books which tell about our Lord's life must be our favourites—but partly, too, because there are so few pictures of the Acts compared with those which illustrate the Gospels.

The Acts begin with our Lord's Ascension, but we have no picture of this. It is the hardest of all subjects for an artist to draw; somehow, when we try it seems just a trifle absurd to be drawing a man floating up into the sky, and we give it up. But those who saw Jesus ascend had no such feeling. It was all most grand and solemn to them.

This was forty days after Easter. Ten days followed during which the Christians waited quietly, as Christ had told them, for something to happen. Let us see who these Christians were and what they did.

They were 120 in number and included the twelve apostles (Judas had committed suicide, but Matthias had taken his place); the holy women who had followed Jesus from Galilee; the brethren of our Lord, who were probably St. Mary's stepsons, being sons of Joseph by his first wife; and the blessed Mother herself. There were many others, whose names we do not know; but of one, though her name is not mentioned, we feel pretty certain that she was there—Mary, the mother of Mark. Mark wrote the Gospel called by his name, and his mother had a large house

in Jerusalem. In chapter twelve of the Acts we find the Church meeting in her house, and so we can be fairly certain that it was the large upper room in her house in which the Christians met in Chapter I.

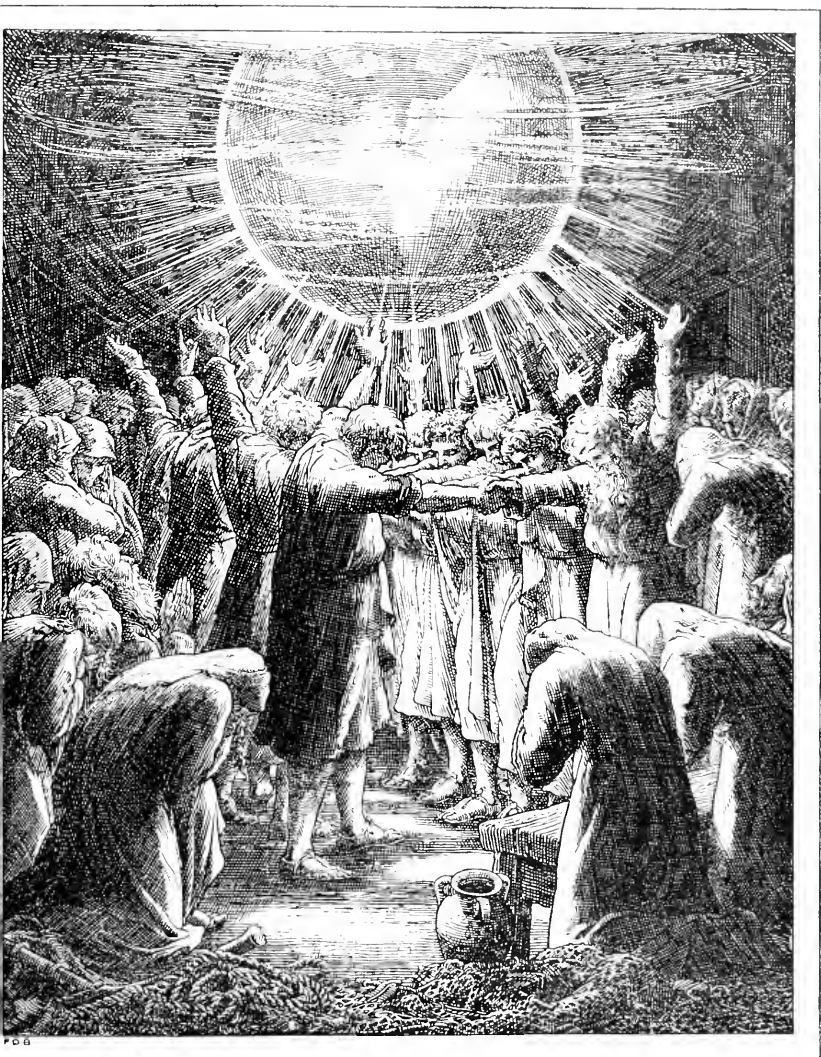
Our houses generally have large rooms downstairs and small bedrooms above. Jewish houses were different and often had one large room upstairs; the larger the house, the larger the upper room.

So we may think of the Christians meeting in Mary's house, after our Lord had gone away. There they were every day, waiting and praying. What a wonderful room to be in! In that very room Jesus had eaten the Last Supper with His disciples. There He had appeared to them on the evening of Easter Day and again on the Sunday after Easter. It was indeed full of memories. Just as they had waited there for a few peaceful hours before the Passover, now they were waiting for a few days before the other great feast, that of Pentecost. They must have wondered what was going to happen. Jesus had told them to wait, and He would send them power from heaven. What sort of power would it be, and how would it come?

They did not spend all the time in the house. Probably they went there at night; during the day they were in the Temple blessing God, so St. Luke tells us at the end of his Gospel. Instead of being sorry at losing their Master, they were full of joy because they knew He was coming again soon. So they waited and prayed and thanked God.

At last, on the day of Pentecost, fifty days after Easter, the thing they had been waiting for happened. It was early morning, and they were gathered for prayer in the usual place. Suddenly a rushing mighty wind filled the house and





By F. D. Bedford.

PENTECOST.



flames of fire shaped like tongues descended on their heads. It was quickly over, and they found themselves talking in a strange way and using words from other languages.

When they looked back on that morning that was how they told the story—the rushing wind, the flames of fire, the strange new way of talking. But it was far too big a thing to put into words. What they said was true so far as it went, but the wonder was greater than they could tell. When the Church had thought over it, the meaning became clearer ; something like this :

Jesus had come again ! and as when He was born at Bethlehem wonderful things happened, so it was now. Christ had returned to the Father and received gifts to give to men. The greatest of all the gifts was the Holy Spirit. And because the gift passed through Jesus and He sent it, it is the Holy Spirit of Jesus, as well as of the Father.

Whenever God works on men's hearts, He works through the Holy Spirit, whether it is God the Father working or His Son Jesus Christ. And the Holy Spirit is Himself a "Person" too, one of the three Persons in the Godhead.

So Jesus came again at Pentecost. He was keeping His promise : " Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." He was with the disciples every bit as really as before, only they could not see Him with their eyes. Even more really than before, it is true to say, because He was not now confined to the one place where His earthly body was, but was there to bless, wherever His Church went, wherever His disciples preached Him. This is what Jesus meant when He said that His disciples would do greater things than He had done. He would be in them, and use them to bless people not only in Palestine but all over the world.

Now you see what a wonderful book the Acts is—it is a kind

of fifth Gospel. We cannot see Jesus in it as in the Four Gospels, but He is there all the same. It is He who heals the sick folk, saves the souls of men, and brings comfort to the sad. The book is called The Acts of the Apostles ; it might be called The Acts of Jesus Christ done by the Apostles.

Out of all the apostles two take up far more space in the Acts than the rest, St. Peter and St. Paul. So the pictures in this book are divided equally between these two great saints. Before we go on to the scenes of their lives described in the pictures, let us say a little about their deaths, which are not mentioned in the Acts. In due time both apostles came to Rome. It was the capital of the Empire, and sooner or later any man who wanted the whole Empire to know what he was teaching would be sure to go to Rome. People from all parts would meet there, and if they heard anything new would take it back home with them. So to-day, the only place where a man from Canada, another from South Africa, and a third from the Highlands of Scotland would be likely to meet would be London, the capital of the Empire.

On the whole the Roman Government is kind to the Christians in the Acts. The judges often saved them from the violence of the crowd. But an Emperor called Nero came to the throne, who is famous as one of the most wicked men that have ever lived. In his reign a terrible disaster befell Rome. A large part of the city was burned down. Some put the blame on Nero, thinking he had started the fire. So he thought it wise to shift the blame on to others. The Christians were unpopular, so he said they had started the fire. To please the crowd he persecuted them cruelly. Their tortures were so terrible that one would rather not describe them.

During the persecutions St. Peter and St. Paul were both killed. Peter was crucified as was Jesus, but since he had denied

his Master and felt unworthy to die in the same way, he asked that he might be crucified upside down. St. Paul is said to have been slain with the sword. The frontispiece shows him in prison writing his last letter, to his dear friend Timothy. These were his words : " The time of my departure is at hand : I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith."

Perhaps the two apostles were martyred on the same day. Anyhow, at a later time their deaths were remembered on the same day, June 29. In England this is now St. Peter's Day, but its proper name is St. Peter and St. Paul.

Now let us think who wrote the Acts. The author was St. Luke, and he was a Gentile and had Gentiles in mind when he wrote his books. Now we are Gentiles—at least Jews would call us so—and naturally we find his writings specially interesting because they are meant for us. He was a dear friend of St. Paul and was with him during a great part of his travels. When St. Paul went to Jerusalem for the last time, Luke was with him. Paul was taken prisoner and was kept in prison for two years. During that time Luke was able to move about in Palestine and find out things for himself. He may have met the Blessed Virgin Mary. If he did not see her, he certainly saw her friends, and they passed on to him what she used to say about the birth of Jesus and His early years. Another of St. Paul's companions was St. Mark. So St. Luke knew him and found out from him all about St. Peter, because St. Mark was with St. Peter a great deal. When St. Mark wrote his Gospel St. Luke got a copy, and that helped him to write his own, but he must have known most of it already from what St. Mark had told him.

So you see St. Luke worked hard to find out all he could and make his Gospel and the Acts as good as possible. But always

remember his other Helper, God the Holy Spirit, Who was in his heart and led him into all truth, teaching him what was true in the stories he heard, and what out of all he learned he had better put in his books.

When St. Paul went as a prisoner to Rome, St. Luke went with him. He remained with him to the end, because St. Paul in his last letter wrote: "Only Luke is with me." The frontispiece shows him by the side of St. Paul. He is called "the beloved physician," and it is nice to think of him as a doctor, helping the tired old man whom he loved so much.

These pictures are to help you to read the Acts for yourself, so you should read the passages in the Bible which give the stories in full and not be content with the short forms of them in this book.

# ST. PETER'S SERMON





# ST. PETER'S SERMON

(CHAPTER II)

OUR first picture shows St. Peter preaching to the crowd after the Holy Spirit had come. The city was full of strangers up for the feast from every part of the world. The Jewish nation had long ago been scattered in all directions. Many of the visitors had been born in far-off lands, and so spoke foreign languages. They would speak the Jewish language too—their parents would take care that they learned it—but the other would be *their own language*. The men of the family at least would go to Jerusalem once in their lives—oftener if they lived not too far away or were rich enough. So to-day pious Moslems make a pilgrimage at least once in a lifetime to Mecca in Arabia.

Some of the Jews, having come to Jerusalem, would stay there. So the city was full of Jews from abroad at all times, but at the feasts it was crowded.

On the morning of Pentecost the crowd of pilgrims would be up early and the streets would be full. Suddenly they heard a strange noise, like a storm of wind, and they rushed to the place from which it came. The wind had died down, but a mixture of voices came from inside the building. Some went to inquire, or perhaps the disciples came out. Anyhow, the crowd heard God's praises uttered in many different languages and were amazed. "What can it mean?" they said to one another. But others mocked and said, "They are drunk."

Then St. Peter spoke to the crowd and preached the first Christian sermon. They were not drunk, he said; was it likely, so early in the morning? No; a strange thing had happened,

what the prophet Joel had foretold long ago. God had poured out His Spirit, and both men and women were prophesying. He then went on to tell them of Jesus, Whom the Jews crucified, but God raised from the dead. The old prophecies in the Psalms referred to Him; He was the Lord and Christ for Whom the nations had been waiting so long.

Now notice the result of the sermon. It shows the power of the Spirit Whom Jesus had promised. First, there was St. Peter himself, who a few weeks ago had been afraid of a maidservant in front of the fire in the High Priest's hall, and had said he did not know Jesus. Now he stood up fearlessly before a great crowd and preached to them. In the crowd, too, the power of the Spirit was seen working. No less than 3,000 of them were converted and baptized that day, and joined the little company of the apostles and their followers. The apostles must have been very busy the rest of the day, examining the people, seeing if they truly repented, and baptizing them.

There is much to look at in the picture. The steps lead to the large upper room. Behind St. Peter is a woman, perhaps Mary, to whom the house belongs. Roman soldiers keep order in front. Men of many nations are seen in the crowd. There is a black man on the left, and another in the distance on a camel. The fair-skinned man on a camel is an Arab. The hooked noses show Jews, the straight noses Greeks. Some are already pierced to the heart with sorrow for their sins. But look at the faces for yourself, and try to learn from the expressions what is going on in the listeners' minds.

# THE HEALING OF THE CRIPPLE



# THE HEALING OF THE CRIPPLE

(CHAPTER III)

EVERY country has large numbers of people unable to fight the battle of life. Either they are blind, or lame, or paralyzed, or perhaps their brains are not strong enough to enable them to earn their living. In modern civilized countries such people are looked after, and homes and hospitals of one sort or another are built for them. There is enough Christian feeling to make either the Government or private people provide such places.

But think of a country like ancient Palestine and ask what it did with its unfortunates. It had plenty of them, because doctors were not nearly so clever as now, and fewer of those who got ill were cured. The dust gave people bad eyes, and as spectacles had not been invented then, they soon went blind. There were horrible diseases, like leprosy, which have nearly died out now. What became of all these sufferers?

They became beggars for the most part. We hear a great deal about beggars in the New Testament. They were found everywhere, and especially at Jerusalem. For the people who went to the Holy City as pilgrims were likely to be kind-hearted and give them money.

To one beggar a wonderful thing happened. He was a cripple, and his friends used to bring him to the gate of the Temple called the Beautiful Gate, and put him down on a mat to excite the pity of those who went in.

One day, at three in the afternoon—the hour of prayer—he noticed two men going in and called out for help. The apostles—for they were St. Peter and St. John—turned to look at him. He saw the kind look on their faces and expected money. This is what St. Peter said: “Silver and gold have I none, but what I have I give thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.” There must have been many beggars and cripples in Jerusalem, and St. Peter must often have longed in vain to help them. It was not God’s will. But God spoke in his heart that moment and told him it was His will that the beggar should be cured. The Spirit of Jesus was with the apostle, ready to heal as when Jesus was on earth.

But something more was needed. The apostle’s words were not like magic. The man had to do his part. “Walk,” said St. Peter. How could he? He was lame. But “in the name of Jesus of Nazareth,” St. Peter went on—that wonderful Man Who had healed so many and, some said, had risen from the dead. And the man believed. He believed that, by God’s mercy, the great name spoken by these good men would save him. He took St. Peter’s hand and made a great effort; stretching the poor stiff limbs, he got up and walked. Wonder of wonders, he *could* walk. So light and free did he feel that he jumped and ran, shouting and praising God. A crowd gathered round. This gave the apostles their chance. It was not their own power or cleverness, they said, but Jesus Who had done this.

This was the second great Christian sermon, and that day 2,000 more people joined the Church, making 5,000 in all.

# THE APOSTLES AT SAMARIA





# THE APOSTLES AT SAMARIA

(CHAPTER VIII)

**H**ERE we see St. Peter and St. John laying hands upon the people at Samaria.

Samaria was an important town, not far from Jerusalem, the capital of a country also called Samaria. The Samaritans were very like the Jews, and their customs were largely the same ; but just as near relatives often quarrel, so these two nations had a continual quarrel. "The Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans," says St. John. So when St. Philip brought the Gospel to Samaria it was not the same as going to the Gentiles, but a half-way house in that direction. Indeed, it was nearly as hard for a Jew to go to the Samaritans as to the Greeks. So we may call this visit of Philip the first foreign mission of the Church.

It was most successful. The people of Samaria had been looking out for the true religion and had been taken in by a man named Simon, who said he was a great man sent from God. They believed him and called him "the power of God." This shows he must have done wonderful things. He has always been called Simon Magus. The word *magus* is connected with magic, and he probably did wonderful things by what we call conjuring tricks.

Through Philip's preaching, many were touched to the heart and, believing in Christ, were baptized ; Simon was one of them. News came to the apostles at Jerusalem and they sent St. Peter and St. John to see after things. On arriving they asked the Samaritans if they had received the Holy Ghost and were told

no ; they had been baptized, that was all. Something more was needed, something like what had come to the apostles and the others on the morning of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost came. Then He came with a rushing mighty wind and tongues of fire, but afterwards He has come quietly and with no such outward signs. But there is one outward sign which has always been there when He has come—the laying on of hands. This is a sign of blessing, and God uses this means to send His great blessing of the Holy Spirit, Who comes to dwell in the hearts of Christian people. We call this laying on of hands Confirmation, and it has always been the Church's custom since the days of the apostles.

Can anyone lay hands on another and confirm him? No, only those who are set apart for the purpose of ruling the Church—the apostles first, and after them the bishops. Everything must be done as solemnly as possible, and earnest prayer must first be made to God.

Simon Magus stood by and watched the apostles. It does not say whether he was confirmed with the rest, perhaps he was. Anyhow, he had quite wrong ideas of the holy service, and he asked St. Peter and St. John to give him the same powers as they had ; if they would, he would give them money in exchange. The apostles were shocked, and St. Peter told Simon that his heart was not right with God ; if he thought he could get anything from God by money, he had a wrong idea of God. He must repent and ask God to forgive his sin.

Simon was sorry when this was pointed out to him, and he asked the apostles to pray for him.

# THE RAISING OF TABITHA



# THE RAISING OF TABITHA

(CHAPTER IX)

**J**OPPA, now called Jaffa, and famous for its oranges, was a seaside town in Palestine, and some Christians lived there. One of them was a woman called Tabitha, or Dorcas. The word *dorcas* was used of a gazelle because of its large, sweet eyes, and when applied to a woman meant she had a sweet look. Tabitha was good as well as good-looking, and spent her time in making clothes, which she gave away to the poor.

It was a grief to everybody when she died. Her friends at once made preparations for the funeral. They got the body ready and wrapped it round with grave-clothes and laid it in the upper room. The picture shows you how cool and airy the upper room was.

St. Peter was staying at a town near by called Lydda, now Ludd. The disciples at Joppa sent for him and he came at once. They brought him into the upper room, and the women began to chatter and show him some of Tabitha's beautiful sewing. But he had no time to look at it. His thoughts were going back to a time a year or two ago, when Jesus took him and James and John into a room where a girl lay dead, the daughter of Jairus. There was a crowd of people weeping. The Saviour said, "The maiden is not dead, but sleepeth." But they laughed at Him for saying this. Then Jesus had turned them all out, except the three disciples, and said, "Damsel, I say unto thee, arise," and she had come to life again.

St. Peter knew he must do the same. God meant Tabitha's

soul to come back to her body, and he was to call it back. He must be alone with God before he dared to do this great thing. So he turned everybody out.

But notice the difference. Jesus, the Master, stood and cried, "Damsel, arise!" St. Peter dare not do that. He was a servant, not the Master, and he had first to pray humbly. After praying he said, "Tabitha, arise." Then, as she woke from the sleep of death, he gave her his hand, helped her to rise, and restored her alive and well to her friends.

Before passing on to the next scene look out of the window. You will see a man leaning over the side of the roof on the flat top of a house. In the next picture we shall see another house-top. Notice also the ship. In some such ship as this, Jonah put out to sea when he went to Joppa and tried to run away from God. There was a storm then, but all is bright and calm in the harbour you see down below in the picture.

## ST. PETER'S VISION





# ST. PETER'S VISION

(CHAPTER X)

SO far we have seen the Gospel preached to Jews, and to Samaritans, who were half Jews—now we come to the conversion of a Gentile. There lived in Cæsarea, a seaport near Joppa, a Roman officer called Cornelius, who was very religious. He was told by an angel in a vision to send to Joppa and ask a man named Peter to come and tell him more about God. So he sent three servants.

We left St. Peter at Tabitha's house. He went on from there to the house of Simon the tanner. Tanning the skins of animals is unpleasant work, and Simon lived near the sea, that the breezes might blow away the smell.

People in those days had little or nothing to eat before midday, and one day when dinner was being prepared, Peter went up on the house-top to pray, being naturally very hungry. Midday prayers were said by pious Jews as they are by Christians to-day. He would take off his shoes to pray. Perhaps also when the prayers were over, he read a little out of the Bible, as dinner was not yet ready. At least, the picture shows a roll of a book in his hand. Dinner was still not ready, and he fell asleep and had a wonderful dream. Now dreams are the thoughts we have in the day still going on when we sleep. They go on all night, but the only ones we remember are those just before we wake. As a rule, dreams are silly and have no meaning, but God sometimes uses them to send us a message.

Just before St. Peter fell asleep he was thinking how hungry he was. Also he must have noticed the sheet of some sailing ship

in the harbour or out at sea. And in his dream the two ideas came together. A great sheet or sail was let down from heaven with every kind of animal in it. He heard a voice telling him to get up, kill an animal, and eat it. But in his dream he was shocked. He could not eat just anything, and must be careful to choose only what was "clean." The artist has drawn some only of the animals he might have drawn. See if you can give names to all, and then look at Leviticus, Chapter XI, and see which were clean, so that St. Peter might have eaten them. After reading that chapter you will not be surprised that St. Peter could not rise and eat straightaway. Then the voice said, "What God hath cleansed, make not thou common."

This means, "The old law has passed away, God has made all things clean, and you must not make distinctions." Then he awoke and it was dinner-time, and three men were waiting downstairs to see him. They were the messengers from Cornelius. St. Peter knew now what the vision meant. He was to make no distinction between Jew and Gentile. Cornelius was as dear to God as any Jew, and he must be received into God's family of the Church. So the next day St. Peter went with the messengers to Cæsarea and received Cornelius into the Church.

ST. PETER DELIVERED FROM PRISON



# ST. PETER DELIVERED FROM PRISON

(CHAPTER XII)

ONE more picture of St. Peter before we pass to St. Paul. Herod was now ruling at Jerusalem, and he started a cruel persecution of the Christians. There had been one before when St. Stephen was martyred; now St. James was the first to die. Herod wanted to please the Jews, and when he saw they were glad of this he went on to seize St. Peter and put him in prison, where he was guarded by soldiers. Herod was meaning to wait till Easter and then bring him out and kill him publicly.

The rest of the Church were much grieved but did not lose hope, praying constantly that God would release their leader.

The night before Herod was meaning to bring St. Peter out, an angel appeared in the prison and a bright light shone there. The angel struck off his chains and told him to put his sandals on and tuck up his long robes so as to walk more easily. Then he led the way, and St. Peter followed. Out through the door they went, along the passage to the street door, which opened of its own accord. St. Peter found himself in the street and went on a little way; then the angel disappeared.

He at once made for the well-known place, the large house of Mary, the mother of Mark, where the Church met and held its services. It was full of people, though the hour was late, and they were praying that St. Peter might be delivered. A maid called Rhoda was keeping the door. When St. Peter knocked she asked who it was, and, hearing his voice, was so excited that

she did not open the door but ran and told the company that Peter was there. They would not believe it and said she was mad. But she persisted, and the knocking went on. So at last they went to see for themselves. They opened the door, and there he was. Stopping them before they had time to say much, he told how God had delivered him. He then said they must tell James and the others. This James was "the brother of the Lord," not, of course, the brother of St. John, who had just been killed.

This is the last mention of St. Peter in the Acts. "He went to another place," it says. We do not know where he went first, but in the end he reached Rome. It is generally thought he founded the Roman Church. Certainly he wrote a letter from Rome at the end of his life called the First Epistle of St. Peter. The largest church in the world, St. Peter's at Rome, is called after him.

# THE CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL



HJ.FORD



# THE CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL

(CHAPTER IX)

**W**E now go back to an earlier chapter and think of St. Paul. His Jewish name was Saul, and, like King Saul, he belonged to the tribe of Benjamin. As a boy he had lived at Tarsus in Asia Minor, but later he was educated at Jerusalem under a famous master called Gamaliel.

Saul disliked the Christians very much. He, too, was looking for a Saviour, but when they said Jesus of Nazareth was the Saviour it seemed too absurd. A crucified man the Saviour! Saul was looking on when Stephen was stoned. After this there was a regular persecution in which Saul took the lead. He went from house to house to find Christians, and if he found any took them away to be tried. Even this did not content him. He went to the High Priest and got an order giving him leave to go to Damascus, a big city in the north, and fetch back as prisoners any Christians he might find there.

He and his fellow-travellers had nearly reached Damascus when a wonderful thing happened. It was midday, but a light brighter than the sun shone, and a voice spoke. All saw the light, but only Saul heard the voice; it was a message to him alone—"Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" "Who art thou, Lord?" said Saul. "I am Jesus Whom thou persecutest," was the reply.

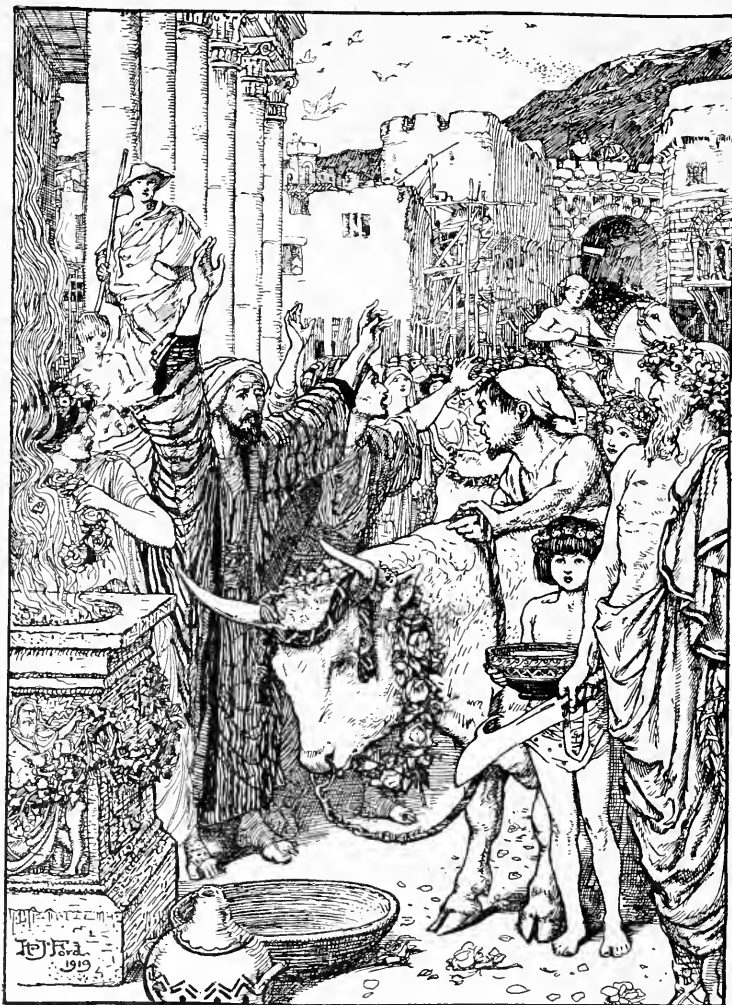
This was his first lesson: Christians and Christ are so near that hurting the one hurts the other.

When the light passed away Saul found himself blind, and his

companions had to take him by the hand and lead him to Damascus. He was three days without food, and at the end of the time a disciple named Ananias came to him, having been sent by the Lord. He laid his hands on Saul, who received his sight again. Then he went with Ananias and was baptized.

He was now a Christian. During those three days he had been thinking deeply, and now he knew that it was Jesus who had come to him outside Damascus. He at once began to preach and tell the Jews at Damascus that Jesus was the expected Saviour. It was a great surprise to them that the man who had come to seize the Christians had himself become a Christian.

## ST. PAUL AT LYSTRA



# ST. PAUL AT LYSTRA

(CHAPTER XIV)

**I**N this picture we see a strange thing that happened in the town of Lystra. St. Paul had gone there with his friend Barnabas to preach the gospel. A crowd gathered round the preachers. In the crowd was a cripple who had never walked in all his life. St. Paul looked at him and said: "Stand upright upon thy feet;" at once the man was able to stand and jumped for joy.

The crowd, seeing the miracle, said: "The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men." There was an old story told in those parts that the gods had once come to live with a good old man and his wife named Philemon and Baucis, and perhaps they thought the same thing was happening again. So they determined to honour the gods and proceeded to get ready for a sacrifice. There was a temple of Jupiter in the city; you can see it in the picture, something like the entrance to one of the city churches of London. The priest in charge made preparations. A fire was lit on the little altar and an ox was fetched. You see a man with a knife ready to cut its throat, and a little boy has a basin in which to catch the blood. Several of the people have hung chains of flowers on their necks, and a garland is twisted round the altar.

When St. Paul and St. Barnabas understood what was going on they were horrified, and tried to stop the people from doing this wicked thing and worshipping men as if they were God. They said, "We are men just like you. You must worship the God Who made all things and loves men so much that He

gives them all they want in the way of rain and good harvests."

These men were heathens, not Jews, and knew very little about God, so the apostles could not say all they would have liked to say, for it would not have been understood. However, they succeeded at last in preventing the crowd from worshipping them.

# ST. PAUL IN PRISON AT PHILIPPI





# ST. PAUL IN PRISON AT PHILIPPI

(CHAPTER XVI)

**W**E have now come to Macedonia, a land far away from Palestine, where so many British soldiers went in the Great War. St. Paul has crossed over into Europe after seeing in a dream a man of Macedonia saying, "Come over into Macedonia and help us."

When he came to Philippi, an important town in Macedonia, he converted a number of people, among whom was a maidservant. Her masters were very angry, and, dragging Paul and Silas, his companion, to the market-place, they brought them before the magistrates, saying they were teaching unlawful things. Now the two apostles were Roman citizens and had certain privileges. One was that they could not be beaten by the order of magistrates without a proper trial such as Roman citizens could demand. But the magistrates listened to no excuses and had them cruelly beaten and cast into prison.

A prison in those days was a low, dark building something like a cellar, and the apostles for greater safety were put in a small cell leading out of the ordinary prison. Their legs were made fast to stocks which fitted into the wall.

At midnight Paul and Silas were awake. Instead of grumbling at the prison and their aching backs they were singing hymns to God. Suddenly there was an earthquake. The stocks came to pieces and the prisoners found themselves free. They might have escaped in the confusion, since the doors had flown open.

The keeper of the prison was frightened, for he would get into great trouble if the prisoners escaped. So he was just thinking of killing himself when St. Paul called out that they were all there. The keeper had lights brought and found it was as St. Paul said. "What must I do to be saved?" he asked. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," was the answer.

Perhaps he had already heard the apostles preach and was wondering whether he should believe, when the earthquake came as a sign of God's power. Anyhow, a strange scene followed. In the middle of the night St. Paul told him and all his household the good news about Christ. They all listened to the story, believed in Christ, and were baptized. The keeper took them into his house, which was probably built over the prison, washed their wounds, and gave them a meal.

Next morning the apostles were released. Indeed, the magistrates were frightened when they heard they were Roman citizens and got them away as quickly as they could.

## THE RIOT AT EPHESUS



# THE RIOT AT EPHESUS

(CHAPTER XIX)

**W**E now have a picture dealing not with Christians at all but with the heathen religion which the Church had to fight. St. Paul stayed a long time at Ephesus, a splendid city in Asia Minor, which then had a good harbour. The city was very religious and worshipped a goddess whom the Greeks called Artemis and the Romans Diana. She was worshipped in several ways. A stone fallen from the sky (meteorite we call it) was thought to be her image. Another way was a shrine or little model of a temple. These shrines were made of different materials, one of which was silver.

St. Paul's preaching was so powerful that many became Christians and gave up idol-worship. This alarmed Demetrius, a silversmith. He called the workmen together and said, "If this goes on we shall be all out of work and our goddess will no longer be worshipped." So they collected a crowd, and the streets were filled with a shouting, excited mob. Most did not know what it was all about, but they joined in the chorus, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians."

Now look at the picture. A man is holding up a statue of the goddess. Another by his side is pointing towards it and both are shouting. With their backs to you are two men dressed up in honour of the goddess, who was supposed to be a huntress, among other things. So one wears a leopard skin. The other has little images in his hat. In the left-hand corner a man is holding a silver shrine, like a little house. The doors are open and you can see the goddess within. On the monument you see

the goddess going hunting in a carriage drawn by a stag. The letters are Greek capital letters. Away on the left is the rest of the crowd ; the beautiful temple, and the harbour with its sails are in the distance.

St. Paul, always brave, would have liked to be in the crowd, but his friends prevented him. The riot lasted two hours, after which the town-clerk persuaded the crowd to go home.

This picture is useful because it shows how hard a task the Early Christians had. On the one side there was a powerful religion, beautiful temples and statues, many who feared being out of work if any change was made : on the other side a few Jews with little or nothing to help them—but the great power of the Spirit of Christ. In the end the old religion fell, which shows what the power of the Spirit really was.

# ST. PAUL AT MALTA





# ST. PAUL AT MALTA

(CHAPTER XXVIII)

**S**T. PAUL was taken prisoner at Jerusalem when he went there on his last visit, and after two years in prison at Cæsarea was taken in a ship to Rome to be tried by the Emperor. The ship fell in with a terrible storm and it seemed as if all was lost, but the apostle comforted the crew and passengers and put new heart in them. At last they got near land and the ship was driven on to the shore. But the front part stuck on a rock or sandbank some way out, while the stern was hammered by the waves and seemed likely to break up. There was nothing for it but to leave the ship, and luckily by floating on planks or by swimming all got safe to land.

The land turned out to be Malta, the island between Italy and Africa. The place of the shipwreck is still shown and is called St. Paul's Bay.

Fortunately, the islanders received the shipwrecked people very kindly. They were cold and wet, so the islanders collected wood and made a bonfire in front of which the strangers could dry themselves. Out of the wood came a viper and fastened on St. Paul's hand. The islanders thought he must be a criminal, who had escaped the sea but was now being punished as he deserved. But the apostle shook off the beast into the fire. They waited a little, thinking he would swell up from the bite or else fall down dead. But nothing happened. Either it was not a poisonous sort of snake or God protected His servant from the poison. When nothing happened the islanders changed their minds and said he must be a god!

You can recognize the Roman soldiers who were with St. Paul on the ship by their helmets. In the distance are some more of the inhabitants coming down the hill. The ship is a very small one compared with modern ships.

# ST. PAUL IN PRISON AT ROME



# ST. PAUL IN PRISON AT ROME

(ACTS XXVIII AND 2 TIMOTHY IV)

**R**OME was the capital of the Empire, and when St. Paul reached the city he felt proud to be there. He had long wished to preach the Gospel in Rome. But, alas! he was in confinement at Rome and how could he? However, things turned out better than he could have expected. He was treated fairly well and allowed to write letters. The letters to the Ephesians, the Philippians, the Colossians, and Philemon were all written from prison. So too was the Second Epistle to Timothy, written shortly before he was put to death. You see him in the frontispiece writing this letter.

By the apostle's side is a roll of a book with Hebrew letters on, to show it is part of the Old Testament. We know he took these rolls about with him, because he asked Timothy to bring with him some that had been left behind.

St. Paul was very strictly guarded. A soldier belonging to the Emperor's Guards was chained to him, so that he could not possibly escape. But it was not always the same soldier. They took it in turns. One after another was chained to the apostle and heard the wonderful story of the Gospel, so that it became known to all the regiment.

Then St. Paul was allowed to see visitors. The Roman Christians are shown in the picture visiting him. The soldier is very kind and does not mind the child playing with his sword. Friends have brought food and drink; this was usual, since the State did not look after prisoners as it does now.

You may think of the children growing up and sharing in that

beautiful Church life about which we learn in the catacombs. The Roman Christians, persecuted above ground, had to go underground and hold services in caves which they dug out. These caves, or catacombs, have been explored in modern times, and the beautiful pictures painted on the walls have been seen again. In spite of the persecutions the Christians were very happy.

We have now finished the pictures, but I hope you will often come back to them and be reminded of the wonderful story of what our Saviour did by the hands of His apostles after His Ascension into heaven.







